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Dear Chair Youakim,

I am writing asking for support for HF795/SF665.

Access to extended school year for the clients in our day treatment program is vital and would give them access to necessary programming. Many of our clients miss school time in order to access the intensive mental health services that are much needed. Having access to extended school year would allow them to catch up on missed educational opportunities and would give them access to transportation to the day treatment programs on days school is not typically in session.

We have a history in this location of attracting clients who have been in the Rochester, Minnesota school system intermittently and have missed an extended period of time. While addressing their mental health and boosting their general functioning is paramount, having additional educational opportunities including transportation is equally vital. In this location, we are having to rely on private transportation companies bringing the children to and from school due to limitations of educational transportation. Having access to expanded educational transportation would greatly reduce barriers to their consistent attendance and ultimately, needed mental health support.

Thank you for considering,

David A Scales, MS LPCC
Clinical Director Olmsted County
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